

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of making a touch fastener having a non-planar topography, the method comprising;

providing a sheet form base, the sheet form base having an upper face, a lower face, and a plurality of male fastener elements, each fastener element having a stem molded integrally with and extending from a portion of the upper face of the sheet form base; and

subsequently thermoforming at least the portion of the sheet form base having male fastener elements comprising stems molded integrally with the sheet form base, therewith to provide a touch fastener having a non-planar topography, in a manner so that functional male fastener elements remain in the thermoformed portion.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

continuously introducing molten resin to a gap formed along a peripheral surface of a rotating mold roll, such that the resin forms at least a part of the sheet form base at the peripheral mold roll surface and fills an array of fixed cavities defined in the rotating mold roll to form portions of the fastener elements as projections extending from the upper face of the sheet form base;

solidifying the resin; and

removing the solidified resin from the peripheral surface of the mold roll by pulling the projections from their respective cavities.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the gap is defined between the mold roll and a counter-rotating pressure roll.

4. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the gap is defined between the mold roll and an injection die.

5. (Original) The method of claim 2 further comprising;  
continuously introducing the sheet form base into a buffer region; and  
thermoforming the sheet form base to comprise a plurality of non-planar regions.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

continuously introducing molten cross-linkable resin to a gap formed along a peripheral surface of a rotating mold roll such that a cross-linkable resin forms at least a portion of the stems of the male fastener elements;

continuously introducing a thermoformable resin into the gap formed along a peripheral surface of a rotating mold roll such that the thermoformable resin forms at least a portion of the sheet form base;

solidifying the cross-linkable and thermoformable resins; and  
removing the solidified resins from the peripheral surface of the mold roll by pulling the projections from their respective cavities.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base comprises a thermoplastic resin.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the resin comprises polypropylene, PE or PET.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the resin comprises high impact polystyrene, polymethylmethacrylate, rigid PVC, plasticized PVC or polycarbonate.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising forming loop engageable heads on the stems.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the heads are formed on previously molded stems.

12. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the heads are molded simultaneously with stems in fastener shaped molding cavities.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is a solid sheet.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is a foamed sheet.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is thermoformed using vacuum applied to the lower face of the sheet form base.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is between about 0.001 inch to about 0.5 inch thick.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the sheet form base is between about 0.002 inch and about 0.2 inch thick.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the sheet form base is between about 0.005 inch and about 0.05 inch thick.

19. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is thermoformed at between about 200 °F and about 600 °F.

20. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the upper face of the sheet form base is exposed to a temperature of between about 300 °F and about 550 °F and the lower face of the sheet form base was exposed to a temperature of 200°F and about 600 °F.

21. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the fastener elements comprise a cross-linkable resin and the sheet form base comprises a thermoplastic resin.

22. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is thermoformed into an undulating surface.

23. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is thermoformed into an open bowl.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23 the open bowl further comprising a flange at a rim of the open bowl.

25. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is thermoformed into a shape that is configured to fit into a mold cavity having a predetermined shape.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet form base is thermoformed into a framework comprising inner and outer members positioned to define a plurality of rectangular apertures.

27. (Currently Amended) A method of making a plurality of touch fasteners having a non-planar topography, the method comprising;

providing a continuous sheet form base, the sheet form base having an upper face, a lower face, and a plurality of male fastener elements, each fastener element having a stem molded integrally with and extending from at least a portion of the upper face of the sheet form base; and

thermoforming the portion of the continuous sheet form base having fastener elements extending from the upper face of the sheet form base to provide a plurality of touch fasteners having a non-planar topography, in a manner so that functional male fastener elements remain in the thermoformed portion.

28-49. (Cancelled)

50. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising forming a flange at an edge of the sheet-form base, the flange comprising a magnetically attractive material.

51. (Previously presented) The method of claim 50 further comprising attaching the magnetically attractive material to the flange.

52. (Previously presented) The method of claim 50 wherein the sheet-form base includes the magnetically attractive material embedded therein.

53. (Currently Amended) A method of making a touch fastener having a non-planar topography, the method comprising;

providing a sheet form base, the sheet form base having an upper face, a lower face, and a plurality of male fastener elements, each fastener element having a stem molded integrally with and extending from the upper face of the sheet form base; and

subsequently thermoforming at least the portion of the sheet form base having male fastener elements to provide a touch fastener having a non-planar topography by exposing the upper face of the sheet form base to a temperature of between about 300 °F and about 550 °F and exposing the lower face of the sheet form base to a temperature of between about 200°F and about 600 °F, in a manner so that functional male fastener elements remain in the thermoformed portion.